

When Parking Your Car

- Use your senses, these are your only tools to stay alert to your surroundings.
- Park in high traffic areas that are well lighted. Avoid parking in isolated areas. Be alert in parking lots and garages, both above and below ground.
- Lock your car at all times. Do not leave valuables visible inside your car, lock them in the trunk.
- When walking to your car, be aware of your surroundings. If you are concerned about going to your car, don't go alone, ask another employee or a security officer to accompany you.
- Have your keys ready **in your hand** while approaching your car. After you get in, lock your doors.
- Lessen the time it takes to get in your car by being mindful of how much you are carrying, don't overload yourself with packages.

**FOR ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

**WEST DES MOINES PLICE
DEPARTMENT
CRIME PREVENTION
250 MILLS CIVIT PARKWAY
WEST DES MOINES, IA 50236**

CRIME PREVENTION/ COMMUNITY RELATIONS



TEL: 515-222-3333

NON EMERGENCY: 222-3321

EMERGENCY: 911

RECORDS: 222-3320

www.wdm-ia.com

PERSONAL SAFETY TIPS



**A COMMON SENSE
APPROACH TO
PROTECTING
YOURSELF**

LIVING SAFELY

Safety is **everyone's** business! No one wishes to believe they might become the victim of a crime. But limiting the opportunity of you becoming a victim is a good place to start keeping yourself safe.

You must prepare to be safe. **Prevention** is always better than **reaction**. Learn to practice safety everyday. While things like personal alarms, chemical agents, a weapon, or even self-defense tactics may help in a bad situation, it is important to understand that they are all **reactive**, designed to be utilized when a problem is actually occurring in the first place.

There are some things you can do to reduce your risk of becoming a victim. The following information, will provide valuable suggestions in regards to making yourself and your family safer. Nothing is 100% effective. However you can limit the opportunity of becoming a victim of crime.

PERSONAL SAFETY

Most street criminals are creatures of **opportunity**. A key to safety is to limit opportunity and desire.

GENERAL SAFETY TIPS

- Wherever you are stay alert and tuned in to your surroundings. **Always be prepared for the unexpected.**
- Present yourself as calm, confident, and know where you're going.
- Trust your instincts. If something or someone makes you uneasy, avoid the person and leave the area.
- Know the areas where you live and work. Know where Police and Fire stations, public phones, and businesses open late are located
- Take a personal safety course if possible.

WHILE YOU'RE WALKING

- Stick to well lit, well traveled streets. Avoid shortcuts through wooded areas, parking lots, or alleys.
- Walk or travel with another person. Safety in numbers is always a good deterrent.
- Don't carry large amounts of cash and beware of the temptations thieves have towards expensive jewelry
- Carry your purse close to your body, not dangling by the straps.
- Don't wear clothing or shoes that may restrict your movements.
- Have your car or house key in your hand before you reach the door.

- If you think someone is following you, switch directions or cross the street.

Walk towards an open store or business or a lighted house. If you're scared, yell for help.

WHILE YOU'RE DRIVING

- Keep your car maintained. Make sure you have enough gas for your trip.
- Plan your route and tell someone where you're going and when you're returning. Try not to travel alone.
- Keep your car locked and windows up while unattended. Look inside before getting in.
- Be alert if driving in unfamiliar areas. Look in your rear view mirror often and watch around you. **Stay Alert!** If you think someone is following you, don't go home. Go to a Police/Fire station or to an open business for help.
- Don't stop for stranded motorists, call the Police for them. Never pick up hitchhikers or do it yourself.
- If possible, a cell phone can be a valuable tool.